

29 April 1985

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MY

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Telephone Conversation With Admiral Stansfield Turner,
29 April 1985.

Admiral Stansfield Turner called me today to complain about the statement CIA released on 26 April in response to allegations levied against the PRB in his book.

Specifically, he said we were misinforming the public by stating that the PRB mechanism was established while he was DCI, that surely some mechanism had existed before that time. I reminded him that prior to 1977 such reviews were done on an ad hoc basis by Security, Public Affairs, and such others as might have had an interest, but that that was the reason for formalizing the PRB in 1977 and issuing a governing regulation in 1978. He nevertheless insisted that our statement is a false representation.

I told him that our statement was a fair and accurate response to the faulty conclusions he drew in his book from his recounting of the ultimatum he gave CIA regarding the release of classified information. Specifically, I told him that CIA had never given him "discretion" to publish the secret, but that he had selectively taken a phrase out of the context of a message that clearly stated the information was still protected by the Government. Moreover, I told him his conclusion that CIA had "adopted this tactic" because his book was critical of the Reagan Administration was a great leap in faulty logic and was ridiculous. He said "You mean to tell me, the White House didn't tell you how to respond to my request"? I assured him that [redacted] and I had co-authored the response without input from anyone, and that the only NSC involvement had been certification of one particular secret. I reminded him that he had received an identical response from CIA to a similar ultimatum of his when the secret at issue belonged exclusively to CIA.

He then changed the subject to the way in which he had submitted his material seriatim, stating that he had done so to remain scrupulously faithful to his Secrecy Agreement. He said that he was "aghast" that we would be critical of him on that score. He said we were trying to tell him how to write his book, which is his prerogative and not ours. A discussion followed in which he asked and I answered how it might have been done more easily, from which he wrongly concluded that the PRB is ignoring the fact that authors must be dealing illegally with their

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publishers. He then accused us of singling him out unfairly, citing [redacted] William Buckley, and Cord Meyer as authors who do not submit to the PRB at all. I explained the circumstances briefly, but Admiral Turner began to let his anger build, so I listened. What I heard were expressions of his utter dismay at our dishonesty, our misleading of the public, our reprehensible act of issuing a public statement, and how upset he was.

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I told him that we had differing views of the issues he raised, but that we stood by our statement. After another blast of his outrage, we said goodbye.

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[redacted]
Deputy Director for Public Affairs